

P O E M S

WRITTEN BY A

BRITISH SAILOR,

WHEN CONFINED IN THE

PRISON OF QUIMPER,

IN FRANCE.

————— “How many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt Man and Man.
How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;
Shut from the common air, and common use
Of their own limbs.” THOMSON.

GLASGOW:

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THE following POEMS were written by a BRITISH SEAMAN, while in prison at QUIMPER and were communicated to the EDITOR by a Friend, who had himself, been eighteen months a prisoner in France. The feelings alone, of the Reader, are appealed to for ascertaining the merit. But it is believed, that the POEMS of a BRITISH SAILOR, written within that prison which was the scene of so much distress to our captive countrymen, and in the midst of the miseries which so many have reason to deplore will be esteemed curious and interesting. The EDITOR has just to add, that a very few alterations only have been made from the copy communicated to him, which probably became necessary, merely from the incorrectness of the transcript, taken in the confusion and inconvenience of a prison.



LAMENTATION

Lamentation
IN THE

PRISON OF QUIMPER.

I.

OH! BRITAIN'S Guardian Genius, why
 thou leave thy sons so brave,
 to drop neglected and unwept
 to the silent grave:
 to pine amid disease and want,
 on cruel GALLIA'S shore,
 in Death's darkest night they fall,
 they fall, to rise no more?

II.

Alas! see the sons of NEPTUNE, bold,
 of valour long renown'd,
 as helpless as the new born babe
 on the cold hard ground:
 no, tho' they've fac'd the battle's rage,
 and seas, and tempests wild,
 doom'd, alas! at last to be
 cruel usage, foil'd.

III.

Oh! many a father's tender heart,
 And many a mother's too,
 And many a widow'd helpless wife
 Shall QUIMPER's prison rue :
 For many a youth, of promis'd bloom,
 And many a husband dear,
 Far, far, from BRITAIN's friendly shore,
 Died friendless victims here.

IV.

Three thousand men were in its walls,
 Once active, stout, and well,
 But ere three months were past and gone,
 Full fifteen hundred fell !
 Whilst, with dejected downcast eyes,
 Weak, languid, starv'd, and pale,
 The sad survivors scarce had strength
 To tell the mournful tale.

V.

Whilst life's warm blood flows through my
 And grief affords a tear,
 Still shall I weep those hapless scenes
 Which I have witness'd here.
 Whilst one idea lasts, and sense
 Of wrong, my heart can swell,
 I'll ne'er forget that land in which
 My gallant comrades fell.

THE SCENE OF WOE.

I.

TELL of QUIMPER's gloomy walls,
GALLIA's desolated land,
Where many a BRITON's spirit calls
For vengeance on the unfeeling band,
Where ENGLAND's noblest, brightest pride,
Was basely trampled by the foe :
That eye but wept, what heart but sigh'd,
To see so deep a scene of woe.

II.

Where, many a youth who ev'ry clime
Had rang'd, and battle's dangers prov'd,
Troop'd, like the fresh rose in its prime
Transplanted from the soil it lov'd,
Unpitied pin'd, unpitied died,
Unpitied doom'd to earth to go :—
That eye but wept, what heart but sigh'd,
To see so deep a scene of woe.

III.

There, void of honour's sacred tie,
 Or of the feeling heart's reproach,
 They view'd, unmov'd, the victims die;
 Unmov'd, beheld their pangs approach,
 Unmov'd, beheld them side by side
 Expos'd to the rude blasts that blow:
 What eye but wept, what heart but sigh'd,
 To see so deep a scene of woe.

IV.

There, long the pale surviving few,
 The saddest garb of sorrow wore,
 Whilst round them noxious vapours flew,
 And cold and hunger pierc'd them fore.
 The calls of nature unsupply'd,
 To dogs and carrion forc'd to go:
 What eye but wept, what heart but sigh'd,
 To see so deep a scene of woe.

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Tune—*Mary's Dream.*

I.

LONG had the victims pale, of war,
With struggles hard, keen hunger born,
And many a gallant BRITISH TAR
Had been from life's bright precincts torn,
Then came the long expected day,
In which, whilst round the tidings flee,
Ere BRITANNIA seem'd to say,
My sons shall weep no more for me."

II.

He meagre, pallid cheek of woe,
Mark'd with the traces of despair,
Receives once more HEALTH's rosy glow,
And happiness sits smiling there:—
Whilst, oh! how sweet, he hopes to hear
All soon, from pain, from sorrow free,
The part'ner of his bosom dear,
Say, "How I've wept and mourn'd for thee."

III

When to his longing eyes appears
 The chalky cliffs of BRITAIN's shore,
 Ah! how his trembling bosom fears
 To find his love is true no more;
 But how he'll bless the happy day,
 When, in his arms, from danger free,
 He hears her, fraught with transport, say,
 "Ah! how I've wept and mourn'd for thee."

IV.

No more his mean, dishonour'd foes
 Shall share him out his portion scant,
 No more shall rob him of repose
 With insults keen, and pining want:
 Heed not the frequent briny tear
 Thou'lt shed, my Friend, mayhap thou'lt see
 These savage foes within thy pow'r,—
 No—"never may they weep like thee."

V.

Oft, as the jovial bowl goes round,
 Amid the sweets of festive cheer,
 Sad, shalt thou tell of those who fell,
 And spare their pensive shades a tear;
 Which, hov'ring still o'er the lov'd clime,
 Must mourn their fate was ere to be
 Murder'd on GALLIA's savage shore,
 O BRITAIN! in captivity.



F I N I S.